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(BOISE) – On Thursday and Friday this week, nearly 500 individuals will take part in the Idaho Prevention and Support Conference in Sun Valley, focused on school safety and creating optimal environments for learning, Superintendent Sherri Ybarra announced today.

This will include educators, counselors, school resource officers, and community stakeholders from all parts of the state. The conference will highlight ideas for addressing bullying and harassment in schools, involving families and communities, strengthening student support services and building effective after school programs for youth. The goal is to equip those who work with our youth with the most innovative, research-based best practices available.

“Social and emotional wellness is critical for students to reach their academic potential,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “This event is a great opportunity to learn new practices and connect with like-minded professionals from throughout Idaho focused on making Idaho schools the safest in the nation.”

The event will feature national speakers, including Jim Sporleder who served as a principal in Washington State. Under his leadership, Lincoln High School became a nationally recognized “trauma informed” school as staff was trained in effective strategies for working with students dealing with difficult situations like Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) and toxic stress.

“It’s [about] using a more effective approach that improves behavior, attendance, student engagement, and higher graduation rates. Using a trauma-informed approach is using best practice for all students,” says Sporleder.

Participants will be engaged in workshops that will prepare them to be proactive in initiating law enforcement/school partnerships, drug and alcohol prevention, violence prevention, and community involvement in schools.

Here are the details of the conference for your planning purposes:

- **Date:** April 14-15, 2016
- **Location:** Sun Valley Convention Center, Sun Valley, Idaho
- **What:** Approximately 490 school counselors, teachers, school administrators, school resource officers and community stakeholders will attend the statewide conference focusing on school safety and creating supportive learning environments for students.

To learn more about the Idaho Prevention and Support Conference or to download an agenda, visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/ipsc/index.html>

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